GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SURFACE TRANSPORT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6464
ANSWERED ON:08.05.2000
ROLE OF EMPLOYMENT OFFICES
RAMSHETH THAKUR

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the role of employment offices under his ministry in the field of shipping and seamen`s welfare;

(b) the number of employment offices/centres under the Shipping Corporation of India in the country, location-wise;

(c) whether the Government are satisfied with the performance of these employment offices;

(d) if not, the reasons for low performance of these employment offices/centers; and

(e) the steps being taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT

(DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN)

(a) As per Merchant Shipping Act, 1958, the business / function of Seamen`s Employment Offices is to regulate and control the supply, recruitment and employment of seamen, to maintain registers of various categories of seamen, selection of candidates for training and their employment on the principle of rotation. These offices also deal with registration of Indian Seamen their employment on Indian as well as foreign flag ships, discharge, repatriation, identity documents, etc.

(b) There are three Seamen`s Employment Office (SEOs) set up under the Directorate General of Shipping one each at Mumbai, Calcutta and Chennai. The Seamen Employment Offices are not under Shipping Corporation of India.

(c)to(e)The system of regulating employment of seamen through the Seamen`s Employment Office was evolved during 1950s for ensuring proper employment to Indian seamen without any exploitation by shipping companies. The strict implementation of the roster system in giving equal opportunity in employment, however, resulted in a large number of overaged seamen occupying the higher ranks in the general roster inhibiting employment of Indian seafarers by shipowners who prefer younger seamen. To compete effectively in international employment market, retainer scheme allowing shipping company the freedom to maintain the roster of seamen was introduced ion 1992-93.

Following recommendation of Expert Committees on issues relating to Continuous Discharge Certificates and Employment of Seafarers and to facilitate the increased employment opportunities of Indian Seafarers on board foreign flag vessels, the Government took a policy decision not to insist on Indian or foreign ships to take seamen through SEOs only.